

2005 Indiana Deer Season Summary



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Season Framework and Regulations

General

The 2005 Indiana deer hunting season was comprised of 4 segments: early archery (1 October-27 November), firearms (12-27 November), muzzleloader (3-18 December), and late archery (3 December-1 January). The early archery season extended throughout the firearm season while the late archery season extended through the first Sunday in January.

The statewide archery bag limit was 2 deer. Hunters could take 1 deer on a regular archery license and an additional deer on an extra archery license. Either archery license could be used to take an either-sex deer, but a total of only one (1) antlered deer could be taken by any hunter during all statewide seasons combined using archery, firearm, or muzzleloader licenses. This was the 9th year that the crossbow was legal for hunting under an archery license by non-handicapped hunters. The crossbow was eligible for use only in the late archery season and could be used for deer of either sex.

Archers could harvest deer in designated urban zones that did not count towards any other statewide bag limit. Each extra urban zone deer required a separate additional archery license. The archery season in the urban deer zone opened 2 weeks prior to the opening of the statewide early archery season. Archers were allowed to harvest up to 4 extra urban zone deer (4 antlerless or 3 antlerless and 1 antlered).

The gun bag limit was 1 antlered deer during the firearms season and 1 either-sex deer during the muzzleloader season subject to the total of 1 antlered deer during all combined deer seasons. A single firearms license was required to hunt with any or all shotgun, muzzleloader, or handgun during the firearms season, and a muzzleloader license (separate from the firearms license) was required to hunt during the muzzleloader season.

The resident deer license fee was \$24.00 and the nonresident fee was \$120.75. Resident landowners and lessees who hunted on land they own or lease and gained agricultural benefit from were exempt from purchasing deer licenses.

Special public hunts were held at Muscatatuck and Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuges, and Naval Support Activity-Crane and Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center

Bonus Antlerless Permits

An unlimited number of bonus antlerless permits were available at every deer license vendor statewide, and each permit could be used in any county in the state. Permits were available to both resident and non-resident hunters. Each permit was valid for 1 antlerless deer, and hunters were allowed to take up to 4 antlerless deer statewide. Hunters could not exceed individual county bag limits, which ranged from 0 to 4, and were published in the Hunting and Trapping Guide. However, in order to put additional pressure on antlerless deer in 13 counties during 2005, these counties were identified as deer reduction counties and hunters were allowed to take an additional 4 antlerless deer in each of these counties that would not count against the regular antlerless bag limit quotas. An additional change initiated in 2005 was to allow the bonus antlerless permits to be used during all deer hunting seasons rather than excluding their use

during the early archery season as had been the case in prior years. One county (Tipton) had a bonus antlerless bag limit of zero (0).

Number of Deer Harvested

A total of 125,526 deer was legally harvested in Indiana during the 2005 season. This harvest was a 2% increase from the 123,058 deer harvested during 2004. The antlered buck harvest of 52,488 represented a 4% decrease from last year (54,743), and the antlerless harvest of 73,038 was 7% greater than that of 2004 (68,290). Total deer harvest has increased annually since 2000. Approximately 2.2 million deer have been legally harvested during the past 54 deer hunting seasons in Indiana (Fig. 1).

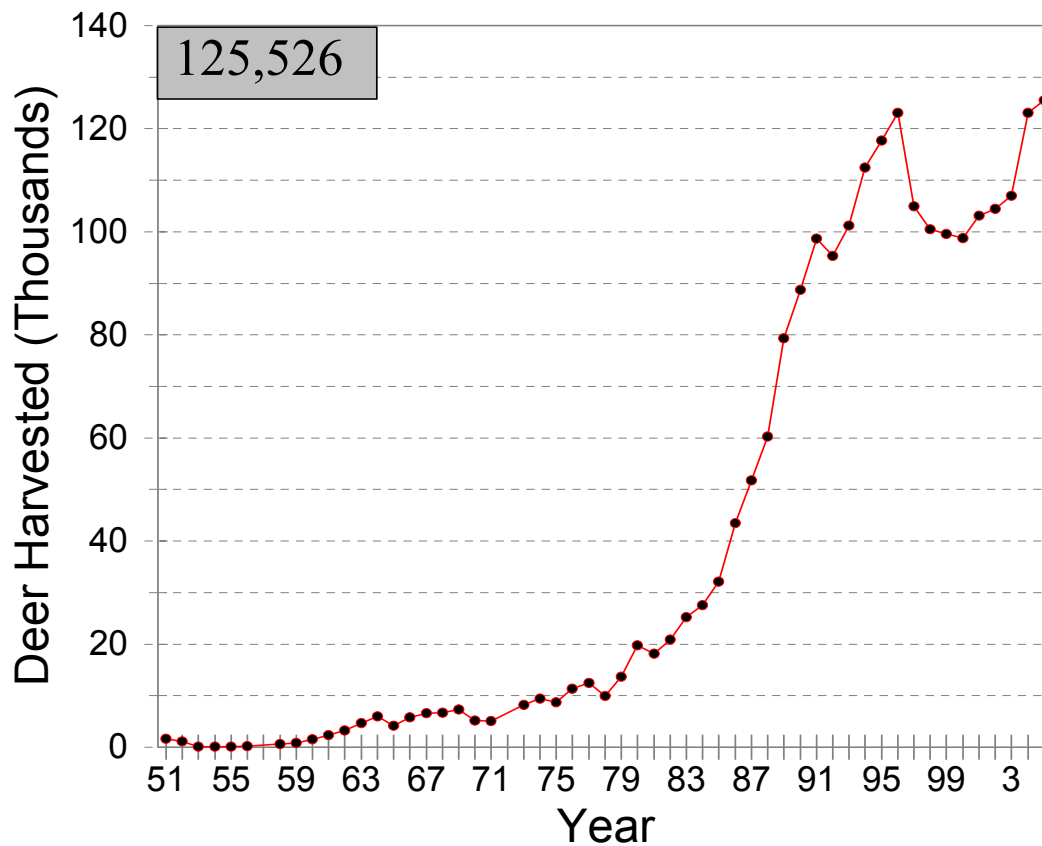


Figure 1. The number of deer harvested in Indiana deer hunting seasons 1951-2005.

The early archery season harvest of 22,844 deer comprised 18.2% of the total harvest and was 11% greater than during 2004 (Table 1). The late archery season harvest of 1,366 deer comprised 1.1% of the total harvest and was 5% less than during 2004. The combined early and late archery season harvest of 24,210 was 10.3% greater than the 21,953 deer harvested during 2004. Antlerless deer comprised 62% of the total archery harvest, which was the same as last year.

The firearm season harvest of 84,664 deer was similar to that of 2004 and comprised 67% of the total harvest (Table 1). Antlerless harvest (44,560) increased 7.5% for this season, and the antlered buck harvest (40,104) decreased 7% from last year (43,107). Antlerless deer comprised ~53% of the firearm season harvest, which was a 4 percentage point increase from 2004.

The muzzleloader season harvest of 16,652 deer comprised 13% of the total harvest and was similar to the 2004 harvest (Table 1). As in past years, a very large percentage (80%) of the muzzleloader season harvest was composed of antlerless deer.

Table 1. Number of deer harvested in each segment of the 2005 Indiana deer-hunting season. Percent change compared to 2004 is shown in parentheses.

Season	Number of deer harvested		
	Antlered	Antlerless	Total
Early Archery (1 Oct.-27 Nov.)	8,845 (10.8)	13,999 (11.8)	22,844 (11.4)
Firearms (12-27 Nov.)	40,104 (-7.0)	44,560 (7.5)	84,664 (0.1)
Muzzleloader (3-18 Dec.)	3,289 (-2.7)	13,363 (1.4)	16,652 (0.6)
Late Archery (3 Dec.-1 Jan.)	250 (-15.5)	1116 (-2.7)	1,366 (-5.3)
Totals	52,488 (-4.2)	73,038 (7.0)	125,526 (2.0)

About 43 % of the total firearm season harvest (29% of the statewide total harvest for all seasons) occurred during opening weekend (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 2. Number of deer harvested on each day of the 2005 Indiana firearm season (includes deer taken by bow, shotgun, pistol, and muzzleloader).

Date	Day	Antlered		Antlerless		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
12November	Sat	15,245	57	11,464	43	26,709	31
13November	Sun	5,654	57	4,321	43	9,975	12
14November	Mon	2,440	51	2,306	49	4,746	6
15November	Tue	643	56	500	44	1,143	1
16November	Wed	1,053	50	1,073	50	2,126	2
17November	Thu	1,573	46	1,820	54	3,393	4
18November	Fri	1,624	44	2,098	56	3,722	4
19November	Sat	3,845	41	5,601	59	9,446	11
20November	Sun	2,176	39	3,455	61	5,632	7
21November	Mon	620	38	993	62	1,613	2
22November	Tue	505	37	862	63	1,367	2
23November	Wed	571	35	1,076	65	1,648	2
24November	Thu	689	35	1,267	65	1,957	2
25November	Fri	1,282	32	2,783	68	4,065	5
26November	Sat	1,592	30	3,669	70	5,260	6
27November	Sun.	865	33	1,759	67	2,622	3
Totals*		40,377		45,047		85,424	

* Totals differ from those in previous table because date of harvest is not known for some registered deer and this table includes deer from both the firearms season and the last 16 days of the early archery season.

Harvest by Type of Hunting Equipment

Five types of equipment were legal for hunting deer during 2005: bow, shotgun, muzzleloader, handgun, and crossbow. The above equipment types accounted for 19, 56, 24, 1, and less than 1% of the total deer harvest respectively (Table 3). Harvest by bow, muzzleloader, and crossbow increased 10, 5, and 3%, respectively, from 2004, while harvest by shotgun and handgun decreased 2 and 1%, respectively.

The total crossbow harvest for the year, including deer taken on handicapped hunter crossbow permits, was 520 animals compared with 507 for 2004. During the late archery season, the crossbow harvest was 93 deer compared with 102 in 2004 and 67 in 2003.

Table 3. Number of deer harvested by type of legal hunting equipment during the 2001-2005. Approximate percent of total harvest shown in parentheses.

Equipment type	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Bow*	23,765 (23)	18,911 (18)	20,748 (19)	21,498 (18)	23,692 (19)
Shotgun	59,688 (58)	63,794 (61)	61,674 (58)	71,251 (58)	70,022 (56)
Muzzleloader	17,738 (17)	19,711 (19)	22,724 (21)	28,182 (23)	29,686 (24)
Handgun	1,562 (2)	1,625 (2)	1,425 (1)	1,620 (1)	1,606 (1)
Crossbow					
Handicap	390 (0)	328 (0)	348 (0)	405 (0)	427 (0)
Late archery	20 (0)	59 (0)	67 (0)	102 (0)	93 (0)
Totals	103,163	104,428	106,986	123,058	125,526

* Crossbow harvest is not included in bow harvest. Values within this table do not exactly equal those tallied by season (page 3) due to the fact that multiple equipment types can be used during the firearm season. Muzzleloaders may also be used during both the firearm and muzzleloader season. Additionally, differences arise due to the different methods required to analyze data when either the equipment or the season is unknown.

Harvest by License Status

Licensed resident hunters accounted for 82% of the total deer harvest. Licensed non-resident hunters harvested 2% of the total harvest. Hunters with a regular yearly deer hunting license (resident plus non-resident) took only 42% of the total deer harvest; hunters not paying the full yearly price (i.e. lifetime license holders, youth license holders, landowners / tenants, and military personnel) took 58% of the total harvest. Landowners and lessees who hunted on their own land without a license and military personnel on official leave status accounted for 16% of the total deer harvest. Of the deer harvested by license-exempt hunters, 98% were taken by landowners/tenants and 2% by military personnel on leave.

Age and Sex of the Harvest

The age and sex structure of the 2005 deer harvest was 42% adult males (antlered bucks), 35% adult females, 10% male fawns (button bucks), and 13% female fawns (Table 4). About 50% of the antlered bucks and 42% of the adult does harvested during 2005 were yearlings (1.5 years old).

Table 4. Sex and age structure of the Indiana deer harvest during 1987-2005, as determined from mandatory check stations.

Year	Adults		Fawns		Total (%)
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	
1987	29,530 (57)	11,139 (21)	6,164 (12)	4,945 (10)	51,778 (100)
1988	34,358 (57)	13,170 (22)	7,050 (12)	5,656 (9)	60,234 (100)
1989	40,503 (51)	19,464 (24)	10,737 (14)	8,614 (11)	79,318 (100)
1990	43,080 (48)	23,680 (27)	12,373 (14)	9,630 (11)	88,763 (100)
1991	41,593 (42)	31,211 (32)	14,626 (15)	11,253 (11)	98,683 (100)
1992	43,508 (46)	25,387 (27)	14,262 (15)	12,157 (13)*	95,314 (100)
1993	44,424 (44)	27,704 (27)	14,751 (15)	14,335 (14)*	101,214 (100)
1994	50,812 (45)	32,466 (29)	15,487 (14)	13,651 (12)*	112,416 (100)
1995	47,098 (40)	40,946 (35)	16,398 (14)	13,287 (11)*	117,729 (100)
1996	47,315 (38)	39,913 (32)	17,307 (14)	18,551 (15)*	123,086 (100)
1997	42,537 (41)	35,163 (34)	14,039 (13)	13,198 (12)*	104,937(100)
1998	44,955 (45)	30,711 (31)	12,257 (12)	12,538 (12)*	100,461 (100)
1999	46,371 (46)	30,474 (31)	11,645 (12)	11,129 (11)*	99,618 (100)
2000	44,621 (45)	31,986 (32)	11,072 (11)	11,046 (11)*	98,725 (100)
2001	48,357 (47)	31,806 (31)	11,230 (11)	11,770 (11)*	103,163 (100)
2002	47,177 (45)	35,357 (34)	11,291 (11)	10,603 (10)*	104,428 (100)
2003	49,533 (46)	36,303 (34)	10,262 (10)	10,887 (10)*	106,986 (100)
2004	54,743 (44)	41,749 (34)	12,501 (10)	14,065 (11)*	123,058 (100)
2005	52,488 (42)	44,286 (35)	13,030 (10)	15,722 (13)*	125,526 (100)

*Number of adult and fawn females is projected from the % fawns of all females aged at the biological check stations (not from the ratio of fawn does to fawn bucks in the total deer harvest).

Distribution of the Harvest

The number of deer harvested in individual counties ranged from 83 to 3,428 (Table 5). Harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 62 counties, 2,000 deer in 19 counties, and 3,000 in 3 of those 62 counties. The antlered buck harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 7 counties vs. 10 in 2004, while the antlerless harvest exceeded 1,000 deer in 25 counties vs. 23 counties in 2004. Antlerless deer comprised at least 50% of the total harvest in 83 of the state's 92 counties in 2005 vs. 75 counties in 2004.

Table 5. Number of deer harvested in each Indiana county during 2005 (after adjustment for unknowns).

No. Harvested				No. Harvested			
County	Antlered	Antler-less	Total*	County	Antlered	Antler-less	Total*
Adams	256	305	561	Lawrence	750	904	1,653
Allen	691	807	1,498	Madison	222	327	549
Bartholomew	508	581	1,089	Marion	106	100	207
Benton	83	65	148	Marshall	979	1,398	2,376
Blackford	172	196	368	Martin	779	861	1,640
Boone	150	163	313	Miami	544	601	1,144
Brown	791	1,066	1,857	Monroe	570	702	1,272
Carroll	341	502	843	Montgomery	509	598	1,107
Cass	536	751	1,287	Morgan	564	628	1,192
Clark	825	1,145	1,969	Newton	481	550	1,031
Clay	574	822	1,396	Noble	1,062	1,857	2,919
Clinton	176	146	322	Ohio	365	726	1,091
Crawford	688	947	1,634	Orange	794	1,311	2,105
Daviess	589	876	1,465	Owen	725	776	1,501
Dearborn	966	1,825	2,791	Parke	1,197	1,963	3,161
Decatur	254	289	543	Perry	898	1,201	2,098
Dekalb	885	1,230	2,115	Pike	795	1,159	1,954
Delaware	280	429	709	Porter	501	702	1,204
Dubois	668	1,211	1,879	Posey	699	769	1,468
Elkhart	542	801	1,343	Pulaski	621	764	1,385
Fayette	298	330	628	Putnam	922	1,115	2,037
Floyd	218	343	561	Randolph	231	302	533
Fountain	647	861	1,508	Ripley	661	1,001	1,663
Franklin	1,029	1,958	2,988	Rush	169	218	387
Fulton	682	1,012	1,694	Saint Joseph	540	652	1,191
Gibson	696	821	1,517	Scott	416	617	1,033
Grant	306	420	726	Shelby	141	183	325
Greene	954	1,285	2,239	Spencer	669	943	1,612
Hamilton	176	242	418	Starke	564	759	1,324
Hancock	114	202	316	Steuben	1,367	2,061	3,428
Harrison	1,006	1,448	2,454	Sullivan	859	835	1,694
Hendricks	303	230	532	Switzerland	1,038	2,097	3,135
Henry	227	329	556	Tippecanoe	587	597	1,184
Howard	188	221	409	Tipton	65	18	83
Huntington	465	683	1,149	Union	262	264	526
Jackson	804	1,366	2,171	Vanderburg	379	428	806
Jasper	598	704	1,302	Vermillion	434	556	991
Jay	358	726	1,084	Vigo	677	704	1,381
Jefferson	904	1,483	2,387	Wabash	600	783	1,384
Jennings	604	973	1,577	Warren	411	645	1,056
Johnson	302	356	658	Warrick	701	839	1,540
Knox	530	463	993	Washington	979	1,629	2,608
Kosciusko	1,172	1,508	2,680	Wayne	453	498	951
Lagrange	894	1,739	2,632	Wells	242	295	538
Lake	567	536	1,104	White	404	526	931
Laporte	951	1,331	2,282	Whitley	589	847	1,436

* Totals may be off +/- 1 due to rounding during partitioning of harvested deer of unknown sex or county.